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MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS
THE X-MEN'S
HAVOK
PHARAOH'S LEGACY—
PART II
ATTACKED BY
THE TRACKERS!
PLUS 3 MORE
ALL-NEW FEATURES!

MARVEL® COMICS PRESENTS™

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Stan Lee Presents:

HAVOK "PHARAOH'S LEGACY" 1

WRITER — Howard Mackie
BREAKDOWNS — Rich Buckler
FINISHES — Joe Rubinstein
LETTERER — Bill Oakley
COLORIST — Andy Yanchus

"A HEART REBORN" — PART 2 OF 8
After finding Leila O'Toole in the Australian outback, Havok becomes involved in a battle with hi-tech Mercenaries. He learns that these mercenaries are agents for a cult that will stop at nothing to have Leila O'Toole returned to them.

BLACK PANTHER "PANTHER'S QUEST" 9

WRITER — Don McGregor
PENCILER — Gene Colan
INKER — Tom Palmer
LETTERER — Joe Rosen
COLORIST — Mike Rockwitz

"A RIGHT TO KILL" — PART 13 OF 25
Magistrate of Communications, Anton Pretorious, has a problem. The problem is The Great Cat, who prowls a black township. anton has another problem, one of his colleagues, Minister of Security, Doeke Riebeeck, who is outraged by the Panther's violent confrontations with South African security forces. And Seargent Eugene Van der Merwe has suffered humiliation and defeat at the hands of the Panther . . . and is determined to have a return bout, but this time . . . He will win!

NTH MAN 17

WRITER — Larry Hama
PENCILER — Ron Wagner
INKER — Fred Fredericks
LETTERER — Janice Chiang
COLORIST — Mark Chiarello

". . . FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW"
Two kids in an orphanage in Iowa during the early seventies catch a glimpse of their own futures. One, a self proclaimed world-saver, the other, the world's most dangerous assassin. The mysterious dying woman who left the kids at the orphanage as babies said that, "One of them is very, very good and the other one is very, very bad." The problem is that the GOOD one grew up to be the assassin . . .

URSA MAJOR 25

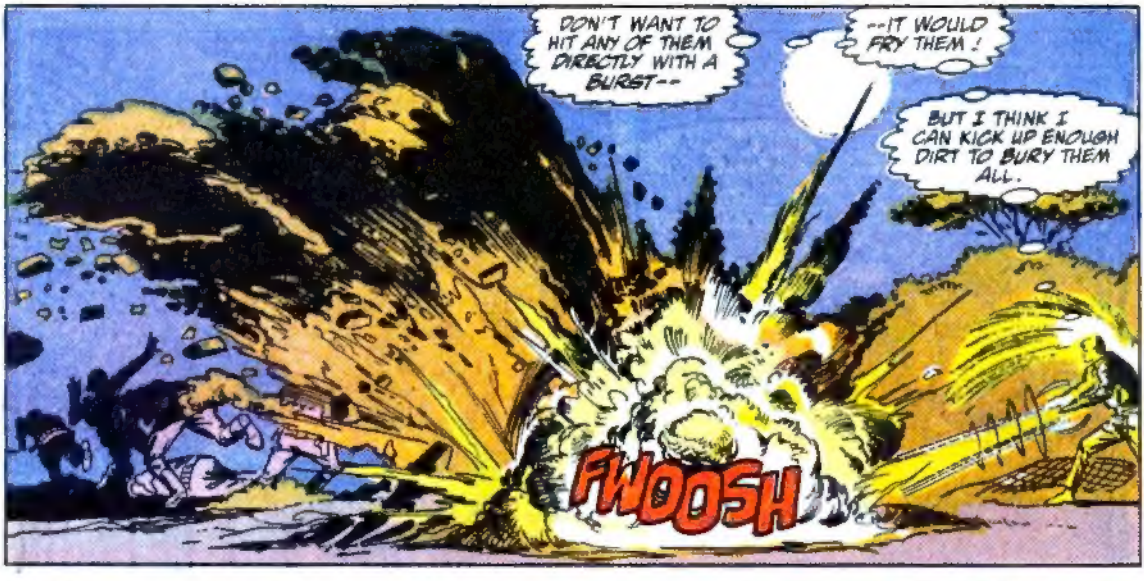
WRITER — Scott Lobdell
PENCILER — Don Hudson
INKER — Chris Ivy
LETTERER — Agustin Mas
COLORIST — Harry Elsenstein

"SOPHIA"
He spent the first few years of his life in the custody of a clan of mountain bears — which may be the reason Mikhail Ursus developed the shape-changing ability that would later allow him to become his Country's first sanctioned mutant, Ursa Major of the Soviet Super Soldiers!

MARVEL® COMICS PRESENTS™ Vol. 1, No. 25, Early August, 1989, Published by MARVEL COMICS, James E. Galton, President, Stan Lee, Publisher, Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published bi-weekly. Copyright © 1989 by Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price $1.25 per copy in the U.S. and $1.75 in Canada. Subscription rate $15.00 for 12 issues. Canada and foreign, $21.00. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC.

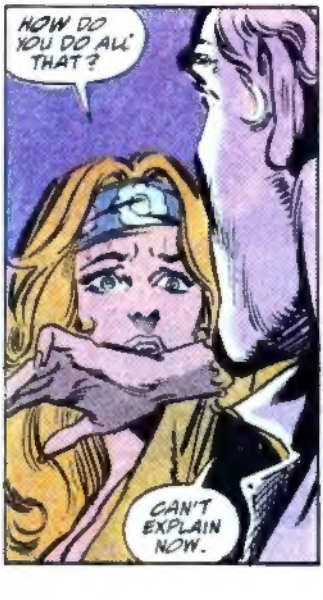
HAVOK
PHARAOH'S LEGACY / PART 2
A HEART REBORN
'KAY, MATES, WE GOT 'EM NOW!
SHOULD WE KILL THEM HERE, JAKE?
TCHK
NOW, NOW, TONY! YOU YANKS ARE TOO BLOOMIN' VIOLENT.
'SIDES, THEY'RE WANTED ALIVE.
'SPECIALLY THE TRAITOR!
I CAN'T LET THEM TAKE LEILA.

HE DON'T LOOK SO TOUGH.
WONDER WHAT KINDA WEAPON HE USED ON THE OTHER GUYS?
'NOUGH OF THIS YAKKIN', RUSS, TRANK 'EM BOTH.
YES, SIR.
WE'LL TURN 'EM BOTH OVER AS A NICE LITTLE SLEEPIN' PACKAGE.
'EM ARABS SHOULD PAY US EXTRA FOR MAKIN' EVERYTHING SO SIMPLE.
LEILA, GET TO THE BACK OF THE NET, LIE DOWN AND STAY DOWN.
BUT, ALEX--!
DO IT!
SIMPLE ENOUGH TO CUT THROUGH THIS NETTING WITH MY PLASMA BLAST--
FZZAT
--AND CARRY IT STRAIGHT TOWARDS THESE SO-CALLED MERCENARIES ALL GROUPED TOGETHER LIKE BOWLING PINS.
THTOOM
THEY COULD LEARN A FEW THINGS ABOUT STRATEGY FROM MY FELLOW X-MEN.


DON'T WANT TO HIT ANY OF THEM DIRECTLY WITH A BURST--
--IT WOULD FRY THEM!
BUT I THINK I CAN KICK UP ENOUGH DIRT TO BURY THEM ALL.
FWOOSH

SHOULD TAKE THEM A WHILE TO DIG THEMSELVES OUT OF THAT!

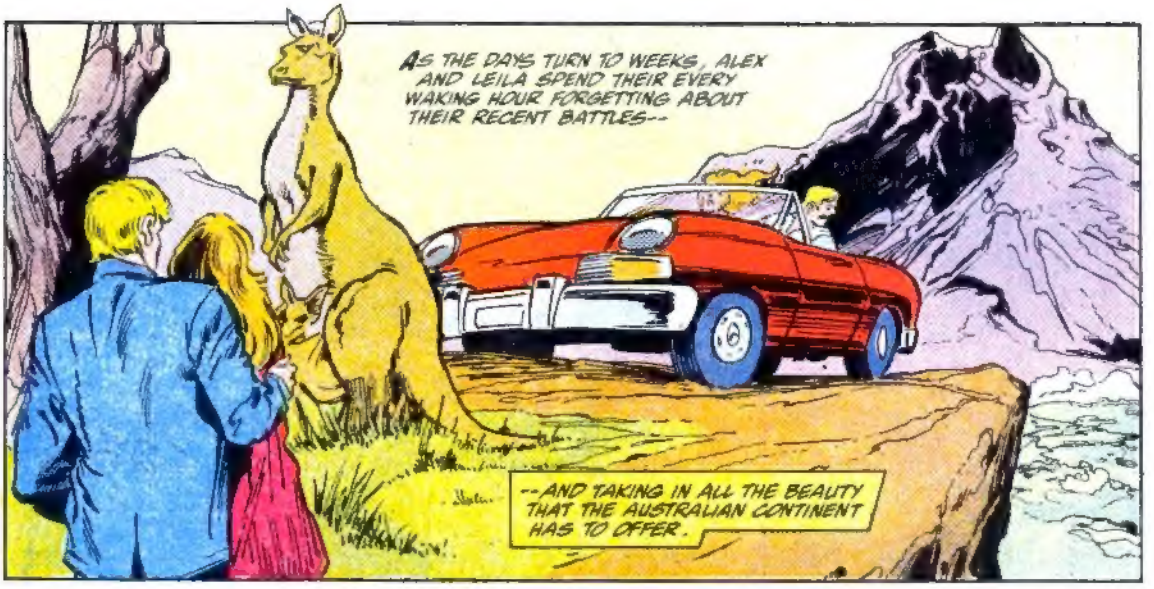
LEILA, YOU ALL RIGHT?
ER--YES. I MUST HAVE PASSED OUT AGAIN.

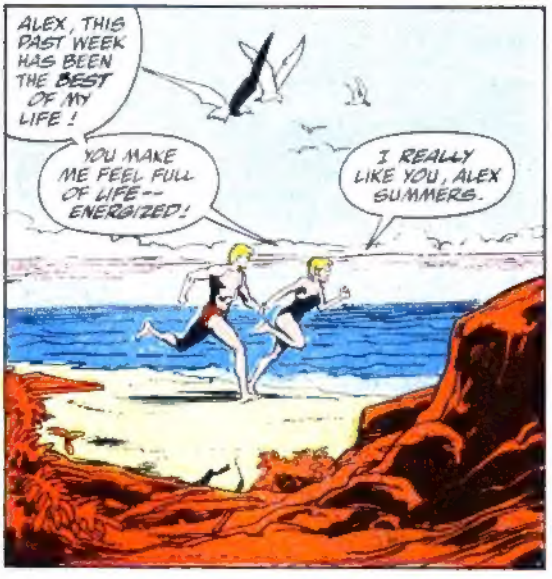

HOW DO YOU DO ALL THAT?
CAN'T EXPLAIN NOW.

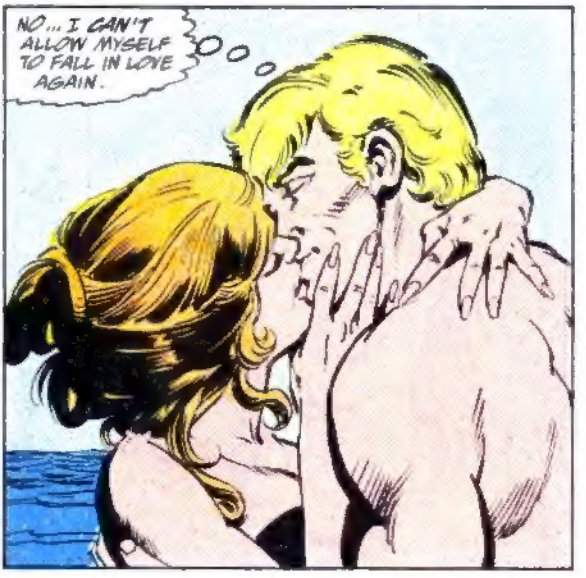
THINK WE CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO FLY THIS THING BETWEEN THE TWO OF US?
WE DON'T NEED THE TWO OF US--
--I CAN HANDLE IT ALL BY MYSELF!

SO I SEE.
LET'S JUST FLY TO WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF THE CLOSEST TOWN AND RENT A CAR THERE.
YOU'RE THE BOSS, HERO.

SEVERAL HOURS LATER...
THIS IS IT.
THANKS FOR THE RIDE.
YOU'RE THANKING ME?
IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOU, THOSE MERCENARIES WOULD HAVE CAUGHT ME! WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY WOULD HAVE DONE TO ME BEFORE SENDING ME BACK TO EGYPT...
NO BIG DEAL.
THANKS AGAIN FOR THE RIDE, LEILA. NICE MEETING YOU.
ALEX, WAIT!
WHY ARE YOU STAYING IN THIS CREEPY TOWN?
NO REAL REASON. I'VE GOT SOME FRIENDS I'VE BEEN STAYING WITH OVER HERE--
--AND I JUST FELT LIKE I NEEDED A BREAK. NEEDED TO TRAVEL BY MYSELF.
IF YOU'D LIKE, WE COULD TRAVEL BY OURSELVES TOGETHER.
WELL...
...WHY NOT?
DAYS LATER...
ALEX, THIS IS SO MUCH FUN.
YOU'RE ACTUALLY MAKING ME FORGET THE UGLINESS THAT I'VE LEFT BEHIND.


AS THE DAYS TURN TO WEEKS, ALEX AND LEILA SPEND THEIR EVERY WAKING HOUR FORGETTING ABOUT THEIR RECENT BATTLES--
--AND TAKING IN ALL THE BEAUTY THAT THE AUSTRALIAN CONTINENT HAS TO OFFER.

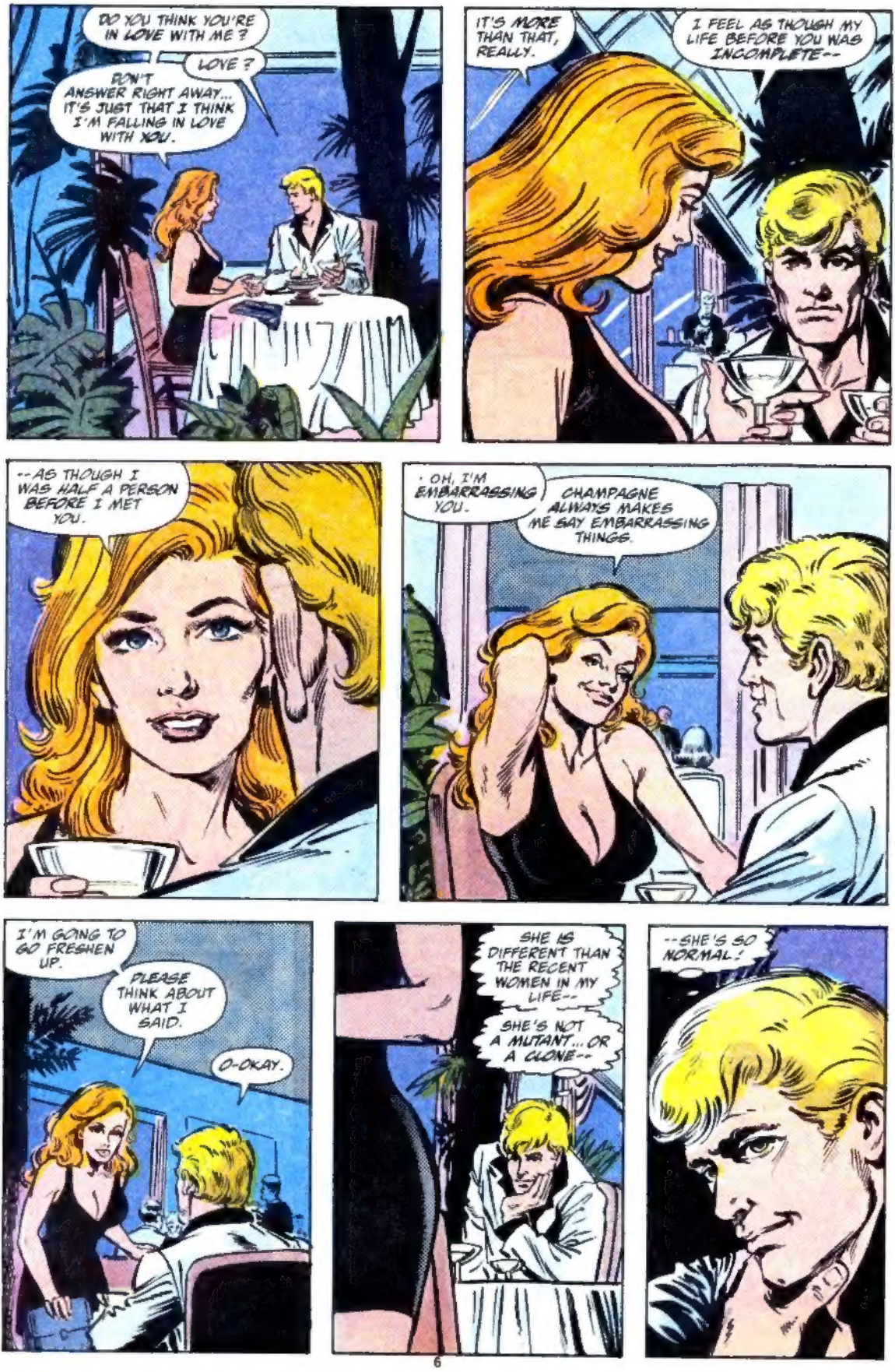

ALEX, THIS PAST WEEK HAS BEEN THE BEST OF MY LIFE!
YOU MAKE ME FEEL FULL OF LIFE-- ENERGIZED!
I REALLY LIKE YOU, ALEX SUMMERS.

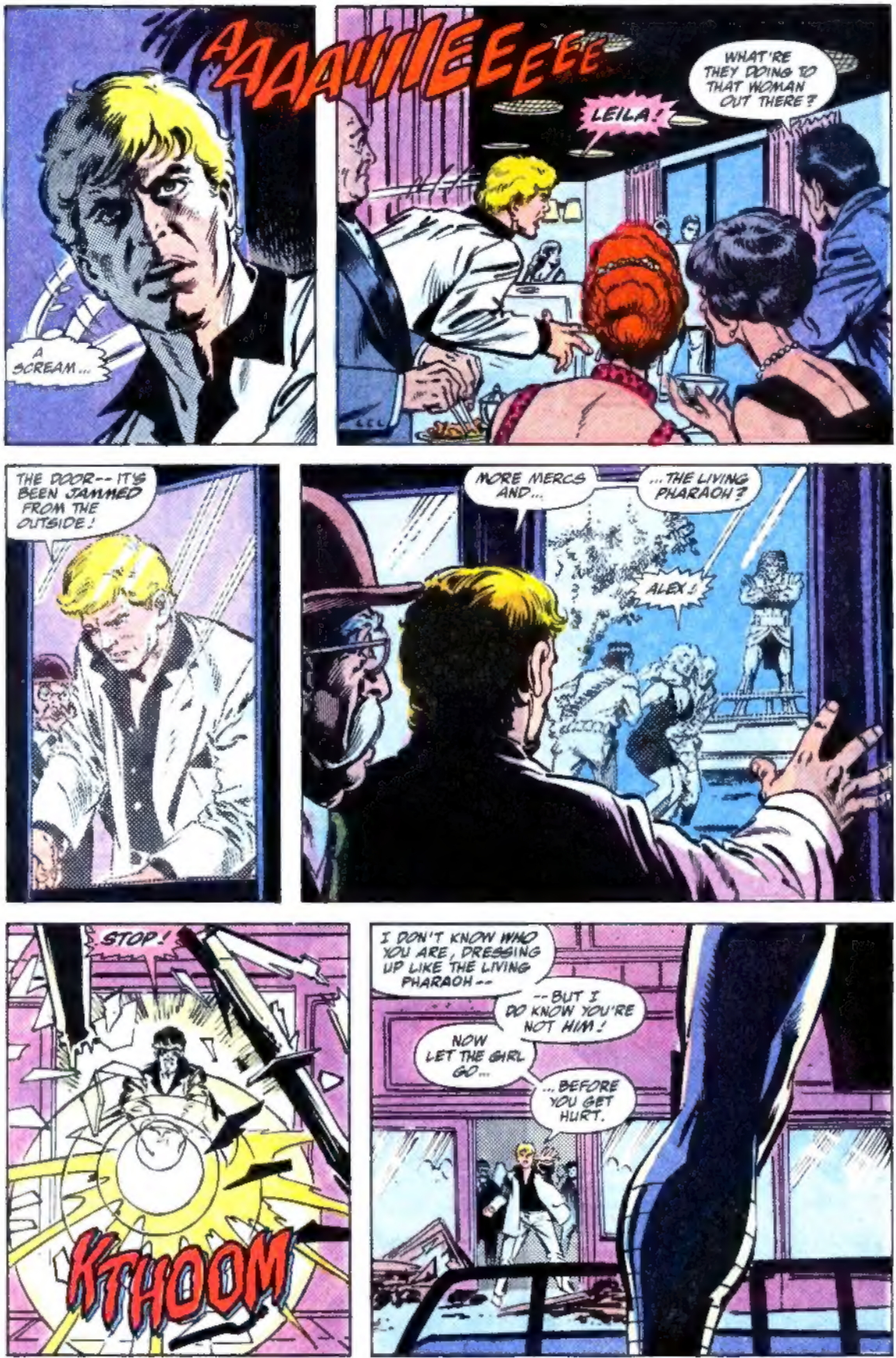

NO... I CAN'T ALLOW MYSELF TO FALL IN LOVE AGAIN.

EVERY TIME I GET CLOSE TO A WOMAN, SOMETHING GOES WRONG.
FIRST POLARIS WAS POSSESSED BY MALICE--
--THEN MADDY BECAME THE GOBLIN QUEEN.

NEVER AGAIN.

THAT NIGHT...
ALEX, CAN I ASK YOU A PERSONAL QUESTION?
I GUESS SO...


DO YOU THINK YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME?
LOVE?
DON'T ANSWER RIGHT AWAY... IT'S JUST THAT I THINK I'M FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU.
IT'S MORE THAN THAT, REALLY.
I FEEL AS THOUGH MY LIFE BEFORE YOU WAS INCOMPLETE--
--AS THOUGH I WAS HALF A PERSON BEFORE I MET YOU.
OH, I'M EMBARRASSING YOU.
CHAMPAGNE ALWAYS MAKES ME SAY EMBARRASSING THINGS.
I'M GOING TO GO FRESHEN UP.
PLEASE THINK ABOUT WHAT I SAID.
O-OKAY.
SHE IS DIFFERENT THAN THE RECENT WOMEN IN MY LIFE--
SHE'S NOT A MUTANT... OR A CLONE--
--SHE'S SO NORMAL!


AAAIIIEEEEEE
A SCREAM...
LEILA!
WHAT'RE THEY DOING TO THAT WOMAN OUT THERE?
THE DOOR-- IT'S BEEN JAMMED FROM THE OUTSIDE!
MORE MERCS AND...
...THE LIVING PHARAOH?
ALEX!
STOP!
KTHOOM
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, DRESSING UP LIKE THE LIVING PHARAOH--
--BUT I DO KNOW YOU'RE NOT HIM!
NOW LET THE GIRL GO...
...BEFORE YOU GET HURT.

IT'S YOU THAT'S GOING TO GET HURT, MATEY. RIGHT, TRACKER?
NO!
KA-ROOM
THAT SHOULD TAKE CARE OF THE MUTIE. LAST TIME 'E'LL BE FLASHIN' 'EM FREAKY POWERS OF 'IS.
SO, MATE, I EARN A BONUS, OR WHAT?
YOU EARN--
--DEATH.
TZZZZZ
WE HAVE FAILED.
THE MUTANT AND THE TRAITOR WERE TO BE TAKEN ALIVE.
WE RETURN WITH HALF OF WHAT WE SOUGHT.
HALF--
--HALF A PERSON...
Continued Next Issue

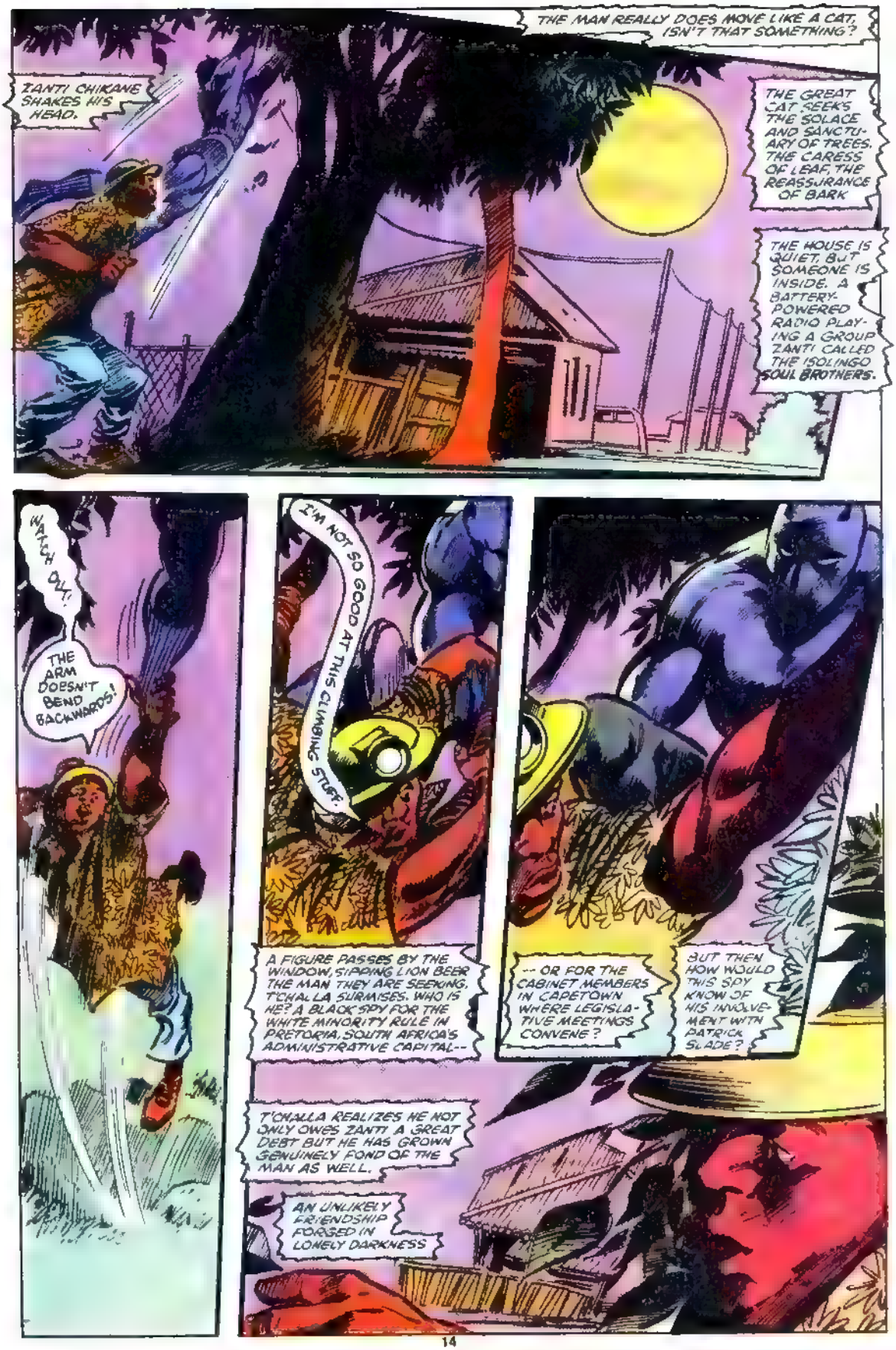
PANTHER'S QUEST
"Of course we are not in favor of necklacing. We don't like necklacing, but we understand its origins. It originated from the extremes to which people were provoked by the unspeakable brutalities of the apartheid system." -- African National Congress President Oliver Tambo, Jan. 1987.
PART 13 FEATURING: THE BLACK PANTHER
MINISTER OF SECURITY DOEKE RIEBEECK'S BLOOD RUSHES INTO HIS FACE, BURSTING INTO RUDDY TINGE ON CHEEKS AND FOREHEAD. BLOOD BUBBLING VOLCANICALLY IN HIDDEN EYES, TRIGGERED BY ANGER ERUPTING IN HIS BRAIN.
HE WOULD LOVE TO SMASH HIS FIST INTO MAGISTRATE OF COMMUNICATIONS ANTON PRETORIUS'S SOLEMN FACE.
PRETORIUS IS TRYING TO PLACATE HIM. IT IS A TACTIC PARLIAMENT MEMBERS ALWAYS RESORT TO, AND RIEBEECK HATES IT. YOU'D THINK THESE CABINET BUREAUCRATS WOULD KNOW THEIR CONDESCENDING TONES WILL NOT SOOTHE HIM, BUT MAKE HIM MORE INTRANSIGENT.
A RIGHT TO KILL
I WILL NOT HAVE MY MEN SUBJECT TO RESTRAINT WHEN THEIR LIVES ARE AT RISK!
DOEKE... WATCH THE GLASS... PLEASE.

GLASS CAN BE RE-PLACED, MEN CAN'T!
BROKEN GLASS WILL IMPRESS ANTON. ANTON TRIES TO KEEP EVERYTHING NEAT AND ORDERLY, EVEN HIS DISPOSITION.
LET'S SEE HOW SUCH A VENGEMENT DISPLAY AFFECTS ANTON'S CAUTIONARY MEDIATOR APPROACH. OH, ANTON IS ALWAYS AWARE THAT SGT. VAN DER MERWE IS WATCHING WITH HIS ONE GOOD EYE, AND WANTS TO PRESENT THE FACADE OF THE PERFECT DIPLOMAT.
WELL, LET'S TURN OUR BACK ON DEAR ANTON AND SEE HOW HE HANDLES THAT. TO HELL WITH ANTON'S PROPER PROTOCOL, AND ALL THAT RUBBISH!
THAT WAS UNCALLED FOR DOEKE
MAYBE, RIEBEECK FIGURES, PRETORIUS DOESN'T READ THE REPORTS HIS OWN AIDES MAKE OF THE [redacted] ACTIVITIES OF THIS BLACK PANTHER.
PRETORIUS MAKES SURE THE REPORTS REACH HIS DESK, THAT'S FOR DAMN SURE.
WELL, PRETORIUS MIGHT NOT HAVE READ THE STACK OF REPORTS HIS PEOPLE SENT, BUT HE CAN SEE WHAT THIS PANTHER-MAN OR WHATEVER THE #%@ HE IS, HAS DONE TO VAN DER MERWE.
NOT FROM WHERE I STAND.
THE LIGHTS FROM CAPE TOWN ARE FAR BELOW, AS DISTANT AND UNTOUCHABLE AS STARS HERE IN ANTON'S AIR-CONDITIONED COMFORT.
A BEAUTIFUL CITY, RIEBEECK HAS ALWAYS BELIEVED.
LOVED IT AS A CHILD, SENSING ITS HIDDEN EXCITEMENTS AND RICH MYSTERIES.
BEAUTIFUL, BUT BECOMING MORE LIKE A FORTRESS EVERY YEAR. THE WALLS AROUND THE EXQUISITE ESTATES BECOMING HIGHER, OFTEN ORNAMENTED WITH STEEL SPIKES.
THE SECURITY SYSTEMS MORE HI-TECH, EVEN PRIVATE GUARDS TO PATROL THE GROUNDS WITH ATTACK TRAINED DOGS.

A BEAUTIFUL PRISON, ITS INMATES GOING ABOUT THEIR DAILY BUSINESS, BUT GROWING MORE AND MORE AWARE THEY ARE UNDER SEIGE BY THE ENCROACHING TOWNSHIPS.
WHAT A SHAME.
DOEKE, I AM REALLY DISMAYED BY YOUR ANTAGONISTIC BEHAVIOR.
HE WILL KEEP THE ENEMIES OF THIS CITY AT BAY--HE WILL PUT AN END TO ANY MAN WHO THREATENS IT.
GOD, HE LOVES THIS PLACE!
YOU OFFER NO SUBSTANTIVE REASONS TO VALIDATE YOUR CLAIMS.
WHO IS IT YOU THINK WILL PUT A LEASH ON YOUR MEN? ALL OF US IN PARLIAMENT ARE APPALLED BY THE EVENTS OF THE PAST DAYS.
EXCUSE ME, MAGISTRATE MAY I ADD A WORD?
OF COURSE, SGT VAN DER MERWE PLEASE DON'T STAND ON FORMALITY.
THE WAY I SEE IT, THIS BLACK PANTHER'S QUITE PSYCHOTIC, MAGISTRATE. QUITE HONESTLY, THE WAY THE MAN DRESSES AND EVERYTHING... IT'S ABNORMAL!
YOU WERE NOT IN THE TOWNSHIP WHEN EINER AND ME DROVE THROUGH IN ONE OF THE RIOT-DISPERSING VEHICLES, BUT HE APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE.
A LITTLE BOY WAS RIGHT IN OUR PATH. I WAS SHOCKED TO SEE HIM DEAD IN FRONT OF US.
NO TIME TO STOP BEFORE WE'D HIT THE TYKE.
THE NEXT THING I KNOW THIS PANTHER, AS YOU CALL HIM, IS IN MY WINDSHIELD, I SWEAR TO YOU
HE SOMEHOW WHISKED THE CHILD OUT OF THE WAY STILL DON'T KNOW HOW.
NEXT THING, HE WAS ALL OVER US!

WOULD WE HAVE RUN THE BOY DOWN ON PURPOSE? CERTAINLY NOT. BUT HE WAS LIKE SOME DEMENTED DEMON, PERSONALLY OUT TO GET US.
EINER IS IN THE HOSPITAL NOW ONE OF HIS RIBS BROKE AND HE PUNCTURED A LUNG.
THEN, HE MADE ME CRASH! HE WAS A BERSERKER. I AM CONVINCED THIS PANTHER GETS VINDICTIVE PLEASURE WHEN HE STRIKES DOWN ONE OF OUR OWN
I AM SYMPATHETIC TO WHAT YOU SAY, =GT VAN DER MERWE. I WISH WE COULD APPREHEND THE MAN, SO WE COULD TRY TO LEARN WHY HE DOES WHAT HE DOES.
DETENTION INTERROGATION FOR THIS... THIS ANIMAL! I TELL YOU THIS NOW ANTON, I MAY BE WRONG. BUT I DO NOT THINK WE WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE HIM ALIVE!
I..
I KNOW THAT ..POSSIBILITY... EXISTS.
I WILL NOT MINCE WORDS WITH YOU, ANTON. I WILL NOT HAVE MY MEN'S HANDS TIED IN THIS MATTER, IN ANY MANNER WHATSO-EVER.
I DO NOT WANT MY TROOPS HAVING TO CONSIDER POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS IF THEY MUST SHOOT THIS MAN DOWN.
ARE YOU INTIMATING MINISTER RIEBEECK, THAT I HAVE BEEN ACTING POLITICALLY IN THIS AFFAIR?
NO.
FROM THE START YOU HAVE BEEN SUPPORTIVE, BUT--
--I CAN SEE INTERNATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS ARISING IF HE IS KILLED.
SHUSH
LET ME PUT YOUR MIND AT REST ALL I WANT, ALL THAT THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY WANTS...ALL THE CABINET MINISTERS WANT, AND I THINK I CAN SPEAK FOR THEM ON THIS--
--IS FOR THE VIOLENCE TO STOP
EASY TO SAY

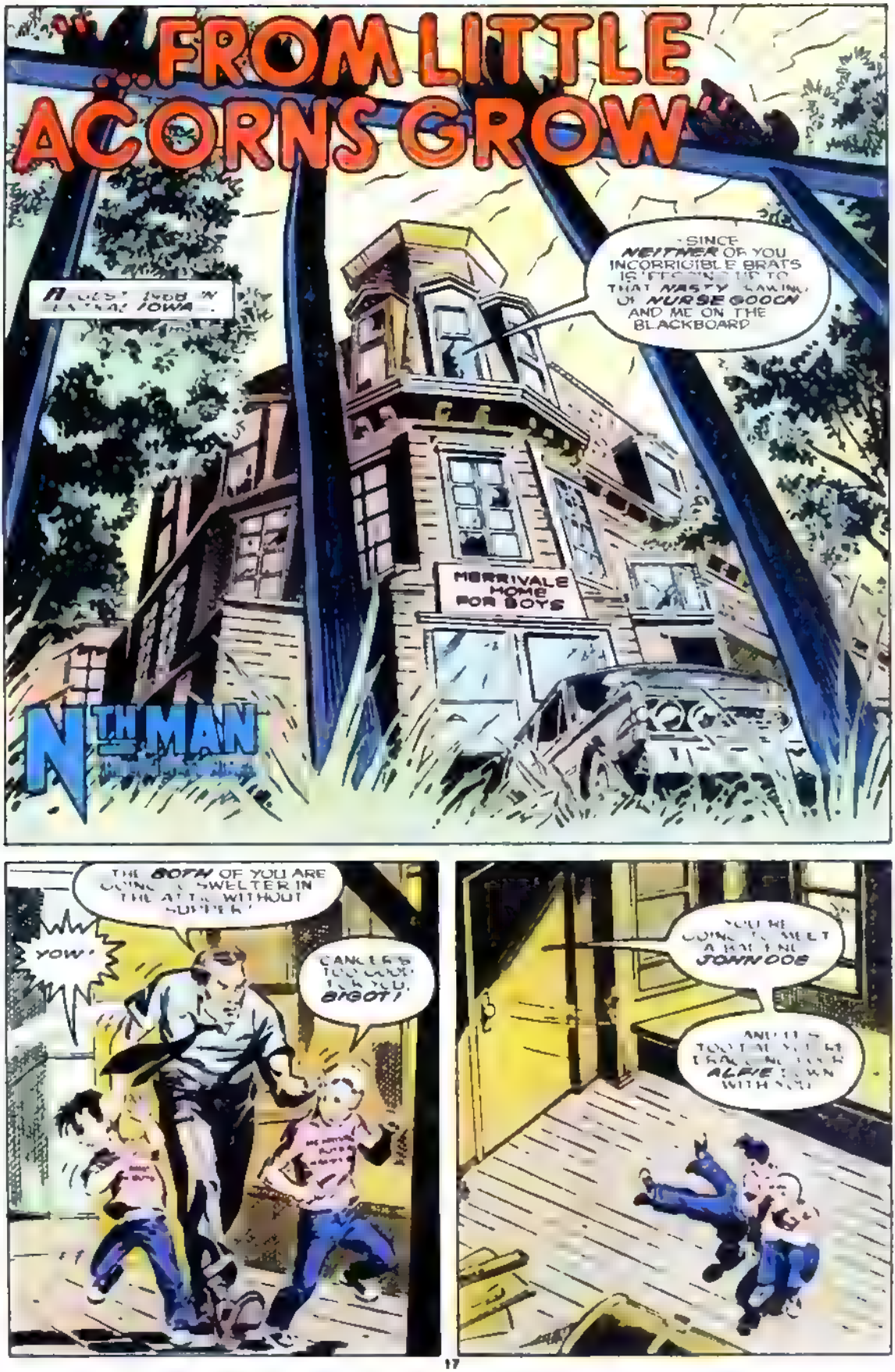
WE ALL HOPE THAT CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT MORE DEATHS. BUT IF THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE, IF KILLING THE PANTHER IS THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE THE LIVES OF OUR MEN--
--THEN WE WILL SUPPORT YOU, MINISTER RIEBEECK. YOU NEED NOT FEAR THAT
I AM FLYING TO THE TOWNSHIP TONIGHT.
WE BOTH WILL.
YOU LOOK AS IF YOU HAVE DONE MORE THAN YOUR SHARE SGT
WHY DON'T YOU GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO HEAL?
THANK YOU MAGISTRATE BUT NO. UNLESS YOU OR THE MINISTER FORBID IT, I WILL BE BACK ON THE HUNT FOR HIM
IT'S REALLY THE WAY I WANT IT. EINER... ALMOST CHOKED TO DEATH ON HIS OWN BLOOD. THE PANTHER DID A FEW THINGS TO ME.
GUESS I WANT TO BE THERE WHEN IT ENDS.
I SEE. I SHALL NOT TRY TO DISSUADE A MAN AS DETERMINED AS YOU--
--OR FOR THAT MATTER, MINISTER RIEBEECK.
GOOD LUCK. KEEP ME INFORMED ON YOUR PROGRESS.
SLAM
ANTON
YOU ARE NOT NORMALLY A PESSIMIST...
...ALTHOUGH THE VICISSITUDES OF LIFE SHOULD HAVE MADE YOU ONE...
GOD IN HEAVEN I WISH IT WASN'T SO. BUT I CANNOT SHAKE THE TERRIBLE DREAD THIS SITUATION IS GOING--
--TO GET WORSE!

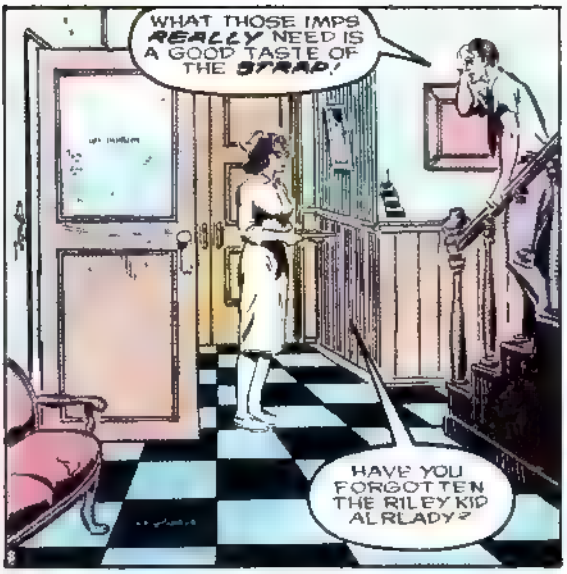

THE MAN REALLY DOES MOVE LIKE A CAT, ISN'T THAT SOMETHING?
ZANTI CHIKANE SHAKES HIS HEAD.
THE GREAT CAT SEEKS THE SOLACE AND SANCTUARY OF TREES, THE CARESS OF LEAF, THE REASSURANCE OF BARK
THE HOUSE IS QUIET, BUT SOMEONE IS INSIDE. A BATTERY-POWERED RADIO PLAYING A GROUP ZANTI CALLED THE ISOLINGO SOUL BROTHERS.
WATCH OUT!
THE ARM DOESN'T BEND BACKWARDS!
I'M NOT SO GOOD AT THIS CLIMBING STUFF.
A FIGURE PASSES BY THE WINDOW, SIPPING LION BEER THE MAN THEY ARE SEEKING, T'CHALLA SURMISES. WHO IS HE? A BLACK SPY FOR THE WHITE MINORITY RULE IN PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA'S ADMINISTRATIVE CAPITAL--
-- OR FOR THE CABINET MEMBERS IN CAPETOWN WHERE LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS CONVENE?
BUT THEN HOW WOULD THIS SPY KNOW OF HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH PATRICK SLADE?
T'CHALLA REALIZES HE NOT ONLY OWES ZANTI A GREAT DEBT BUT HE HAS GROWN GENUINELY FOND OF THE MAN AS WELL.
AN UNLIKELY FRIENDSHIP FORGED IN LONELY DARKNESS

ZANTI, IF I DO FIND MY MOTHER WHEN WE MEET, . I CANNOT STOP WONDERING WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE BETWEEN US.
A USELESS BURDEN TO PUT ON ONESELF. YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHO SHE IS... HOW SHE WILL REACT... SO WHAT USE IS IT TO IMAGINE SHE IS THIS OR THAT... OR WHAT YOU WILL SAY? YOU CAN IMAGINE THE MEETING MANY WAYS.. AND IT WILL PROBABLY BE DIFFERENT FROM ANY YOU IMAGINE.
I HAVE OFTEN THOUGHT THAT ONE OF THE HARDEST THINGS FOR PEOPLE TO DO IN LIFE IS...
YES?
FOOD IS OUT
IS FOR CHILDREN TO ACCEPT WHO THEIR PARENTS ARE--
--AND FOR PARENTS TO ACCEPT WHO THEIR CHILDREN BECOME.
BUT UNTIL THEY COME TO THAT POINT OF ACCEPTANCE, ZANTI, IT WILL ALWAYS BE A DISRUPTIVE FACTOR IN THEIR LIVES... AND THEY WILL NOT FIND CONTENTMENT WITH EACH OTHER--
--OR THEMSELVES.
I DO NOT HAVE THAT PROBLEM. I HAVE ENOUGH TROUBLE KEEPING MY CHILDREN'S BELLIES FULL.

IF ANYBODY WANTS TO WORRY ABOUT SUCH THINGS, I WILL LET GOD DO IT.
I CANNOT ARGUE WITH THAT LET ME ASK YOU SOME-THING, ZANTI
WHEN THIS IS FINISHED, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, IF SHE IS ALIVE OR NOT, WOULD YOU LEAVE HERE ...I MEAN WITH YOUR FAMILY?
TO WAKANDA
YES
IT SOUNDS A WONDERFUL PLACE
IT ALSO HAS ITS PROBLEMS. IT IS NOT PARADISE. I WOULD NOT WANT TO EXAGGERATE IT
YOU LOVE YOUR LAND?
YES I DO
AND THAT IS HOW IT IS WITH ME. SINCE I HAVE RUN TIME AND AGAIN INTO THE AUTHORITY THAT IMPOSES APARTHEID... IT HAS ONLY INTENSIFIED MY LOVE FOR MY COUNTRY.
I WANT TO FIGHT FOR IT... FOR MYSELF... FOR MY CHILDREN.
WE'LL LEAVE IT AT THAT, THEN!
ZANTI. A GROUP IS COMING... WANTING TO BE HEARD
THE COMRADS! ONE OF THEIR MEMBERS MUST HAVE ALSO SEEN THE SPY'S EQUIP-MENT.
IF THE COMRADS HELD COURT ON HIM AND DECIDED HE WAS GUILTY OF PROFITTING FROM GOVERN-MENT POLICIES--
--OR WORSE, A TRAITOR LIVING IN THEIR MIDST--
-- THERE IS ONLY ONE VERDICT AND THEY SEIZE THE RIGHTS WHITES HAVE .. THEY WILL EXECUTE THEIR SENTENCE.
DEATH . BY NECK-LACE CEREMONY.
WE HAVE ARRIVED TOO LATE!
KRRRAAASSSHH

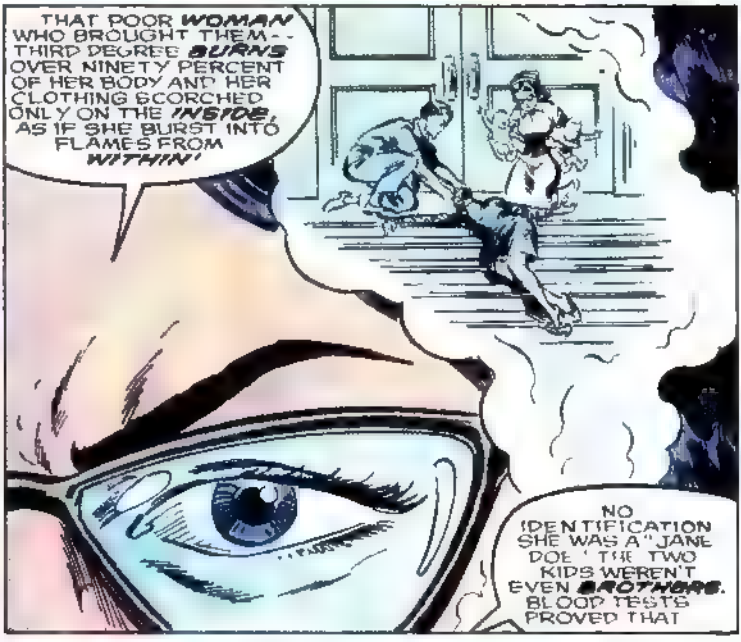
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE...

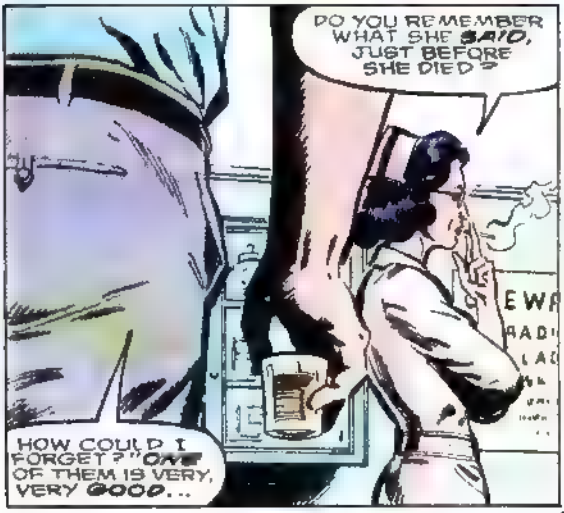

...FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW
SINCE NEITHER OF YOU INCORRIGIBLE BRATS IS 'FESSIN' UP TO THAT NASTY LAWING OF NURSE GOOCH AND ME ON THE BLACKBOARD
MERRIVALE HOME FOR BOYS
NTH MAN
THE BOTH OF YOU ARE GOING TO SWELTER IN THE ATTIC WITHOUT SUPPER!
YOW!
CANCELS TOO GOOD FOR YOU, BIGOT!
YOU'RE GOING TO MEET A NICE LAD NAMED JOHN DOE
AND IT'S YOU'LL BE TRADING BLOWS WITH ALFIE BROWN WITH NO!


WHAT THOSE IMPS REALLY NEED IS A GOOD TASTE OF THE STRAP!
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE RILEY KID ALREADY?

HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO HAVE KNOWN THAT THE LITTLE BULLY HAD A HEART CONDITION?
IF YOU HADN'T BRUISED HIM UP SO BADLY, WE WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO BURN DOWN THE ANNEX!

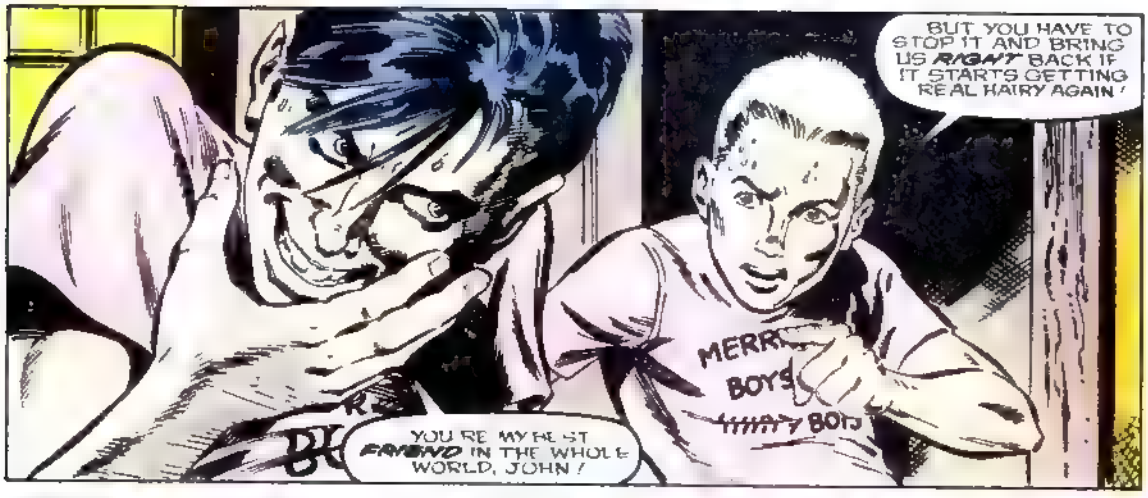
WE SHOULD HAVE DUMPED JOHN AND ALFIE IN THAT FIRE TOO! THEY'VE BEEN NOTHING BUT TROUBLE FROM THE GIT-GO!
I STILL GET THE HEEBIE-JEEBIES WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE NIGHT THEY SHOWED UP HERE

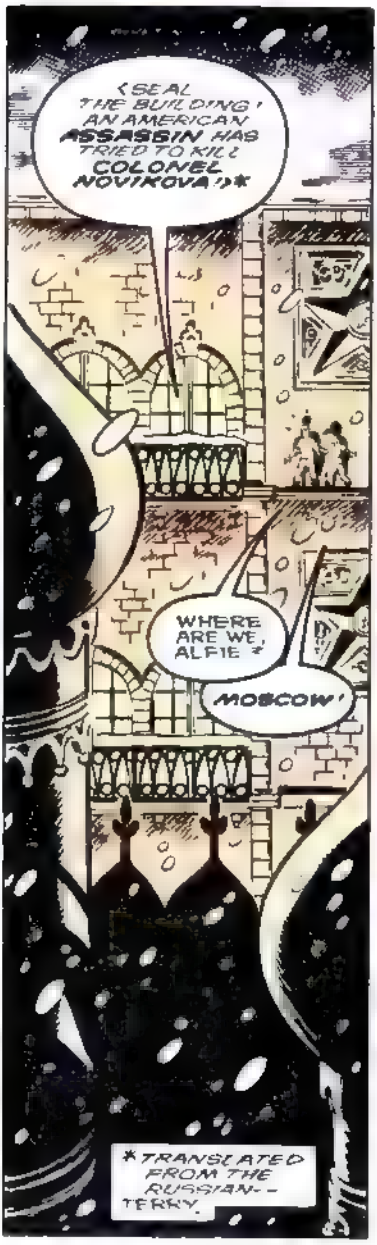

THAT POOR WOMAN WHO BROUGHT THEM -- THIRD DEGREE BURNS OVER NINETY PERCENT OF HER BODY AND HER CLOTHING SCORCHED ONLY ON THE INSIDE, AS IF SHE BURST INTO FLAMES FROM WITHIN!
NO IDENTIFICATION SHE WAS A "JANE DOE" THE TWO KIDS WEREN'T EVEN BROTHERS. BLOOD TESTS PROVED THAT


DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT SHE SAID, JUST BEFORE SHE DIED?
HOW COULD I FORGET? "ONE OF THEM IS VERY, VERY GOOD..."

"...AND THE OTHER ONE IS VERY, VERY BAD!"
HOW BAD DO YOU WANT TO BE, ELMORE? BAD ENOUGH TO LOCK THE DOOR?

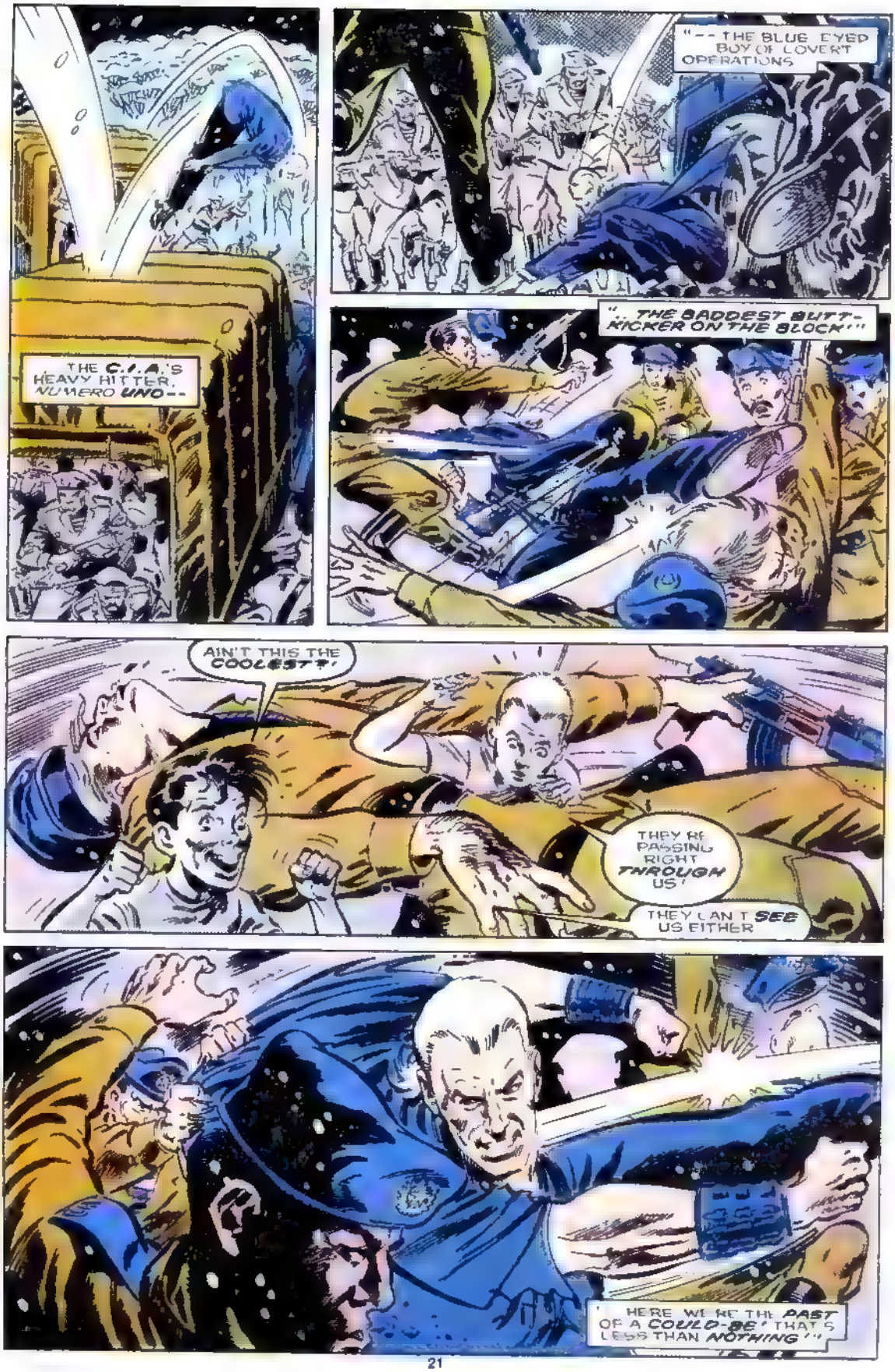
JOHN? THANKS FOR TAKING THE BLAME WITH ME. I COULDN'T TAKE IT ALL BY MYSELF.
FORGET IT, ALFIE.
HEY! YOU WANNA GO LOOK AT "COULD-BE" STUFF AGAIN?
NO WAY! IT'S CREEPY!
NOT ALWAYS! SOMETIMES, IN THE 'COULD BES", WE'RE LIKE REALLY STRONG AND STUFF AND
NOBODY PUSHES US AROUND AND EVERYTHING IS FAIR--
-- NOT LIKE HERE AND NOW.
OH, C'MON. I'LL GO WITH YOU FOR JUST A LITTLE WHILE..


BUT YOU HAVE TO STOP IT AND BRING US *RIGHT* BACK IF IT STARTS GETTING REAL HAIRY AGAIN!
MERRY BOYS
YOU'RE MY BEST *FRIEND* IN THE WHOLE WORLD, JOHN!

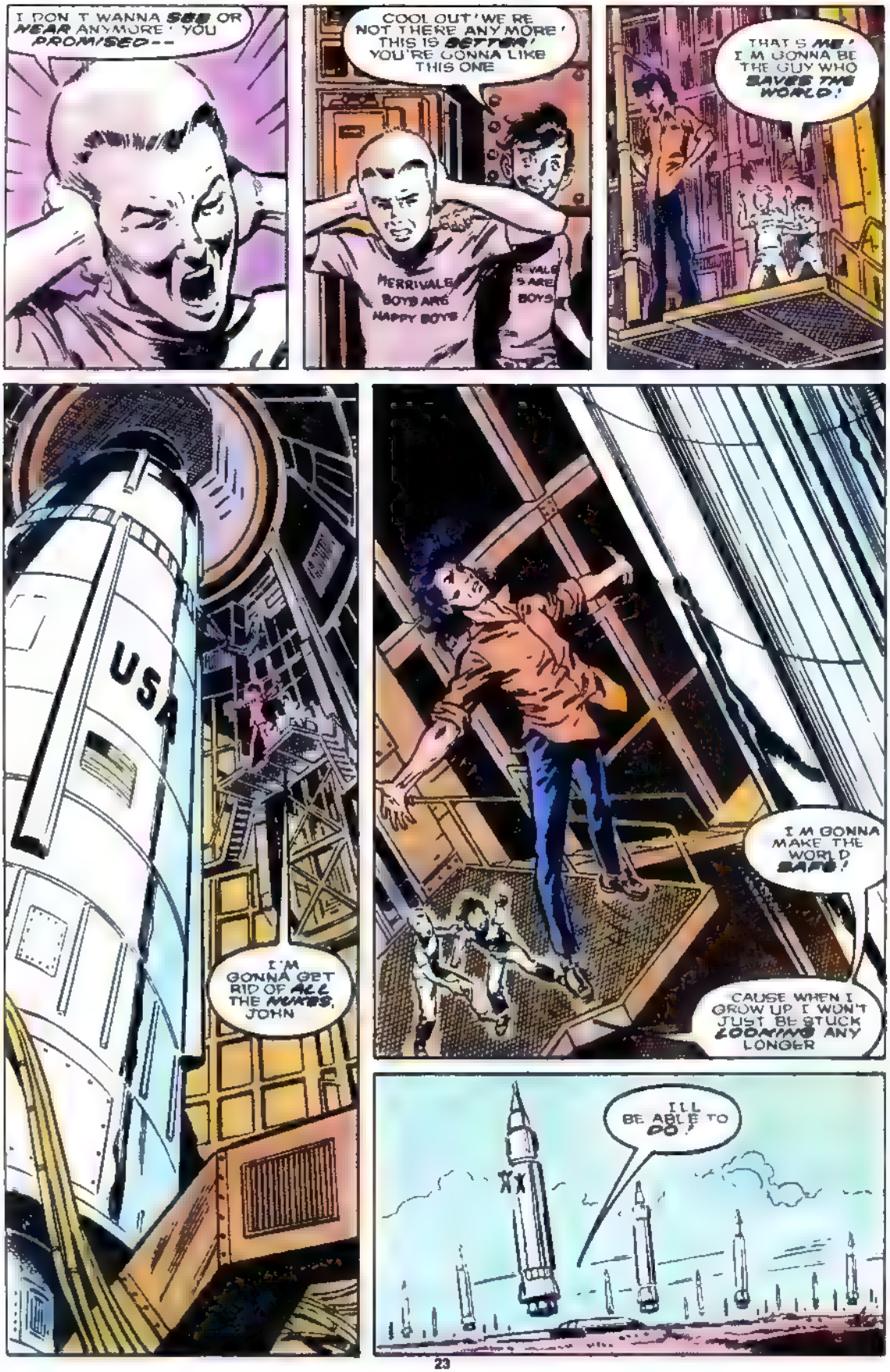

(SEAL THE BUILDING! AN AMERICAN *ASSASSIN* HAS TRIED TO KILL COLONEL NOVIKOVA!)*
WHERE ARE WE, ALFIE?
MOSCOW!
*TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN-- TERRY.

IS THAT *ME*?
YEAH! THIS IS BETTER THAN WATCHING NURSE GOOCH BEND OVER!

I'M GONNA BE AN *ASSASSIN*!
YOU'RE GONNA BE THE *BEST*..

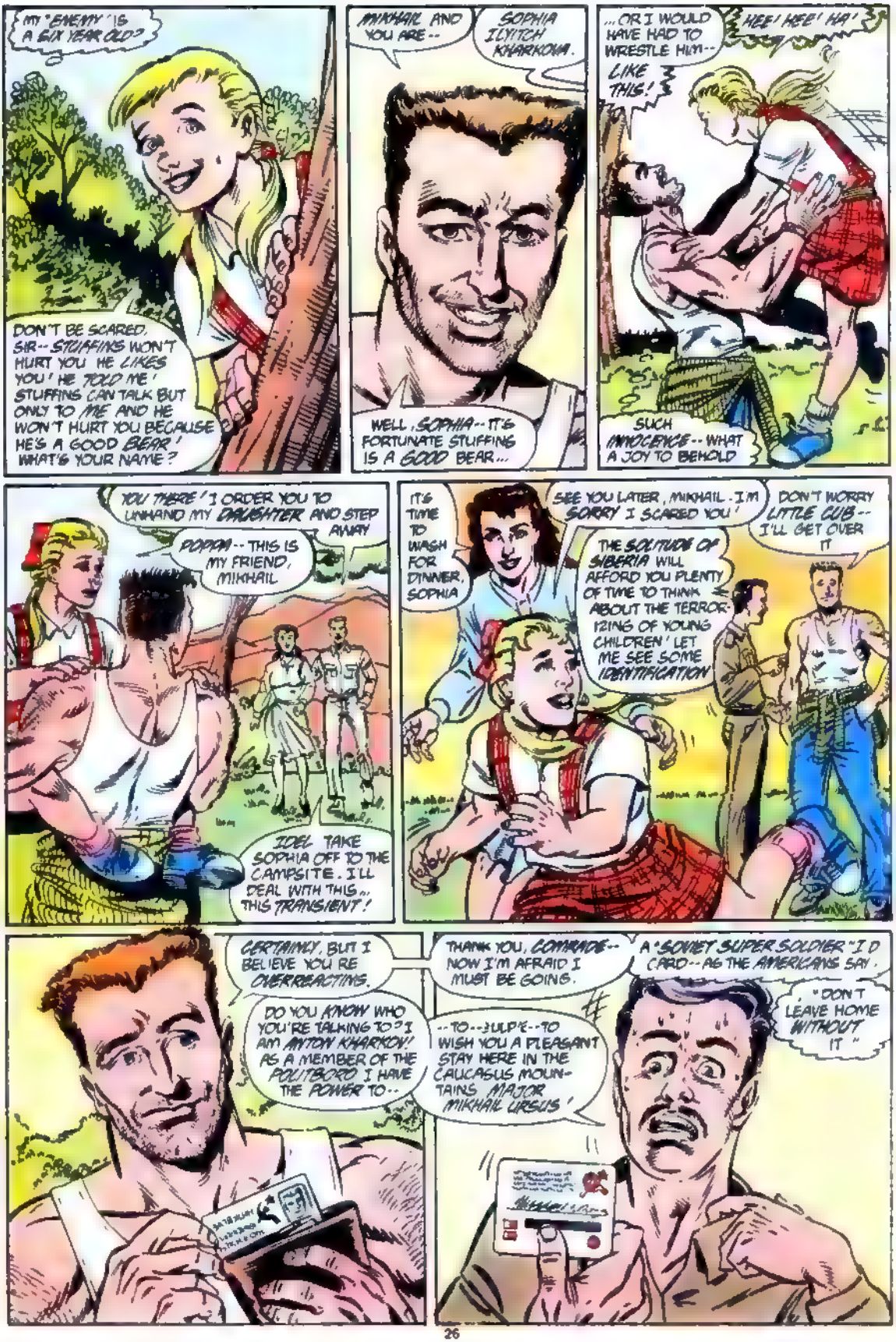

THE C.I.A.'S HEAVY HITTER, NUMERO UNO--
"-- THE BLUE EYED BOY OF COVERT OPERATIONS
"... THE BADDEST BUTT-KICKER ON THE BLOCK!"
AIN'T THIS THE COOLEST?!
THEY'RE PASSING RIGHT THROUGH US!
THEY CAN'T SEE US EITHER
"... HERE WE'RE THE PAST OF A COULD-BE' THAT'S LESS THAN NOTHING'"

(DO I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING AROUND HERE?)
(PACK HIM OFF TO THE LUBIANKA)
(DID YOU TERMINATE HIM CAPTAIN SOLOVIEV?)
(NOT TRANQUILIZED COLONEL NOVIKOVA, YOU I WANT TO DISPATCH HIM PERSONALLY OF COURSE...)
I WANNA GO BACK!
(I WANT HIM BROKEN APART)
WOW! SHE'S HOT!
JOHN, YOU LET THEM CAPTURE YOU? YOU'RE GONNA WAIT UNTIL THE BIG BLONDE COMES TO GRILL YOU AND (SMACK) YOU BREAK HER NECK
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, ALFIE
I DON'T WANNA KILL HER I DON'T WANNA KILL ANYBODY!
AWWW SHE'S HEAD OF THE SOVIETSKUNO, TIL HIT (SQUAT) OF THE A@#$, REAL SLAMO!


I DON'T WANNA SEE OR HEAR ANYMORE OF YOU PROMISED--
COOL OUT! WE'RE NOT THERE ANYMORE! THIS IS BETTER! YOU'RE GONNA LIKE THIS ONE
MERRIVALE BOYS ARE HAPPY BOYS
THAT'S ME! I'M GONNA BE THE GUY WHO SAVES THE WORLD!
USA
I'M GONNA GET RID OF ALL THE MEMES, JOHN
I'M GONNA MAKE THE WORLD SAFE!
CAUSE WHEN I GROW UP I WON'T JUST BE STUCK LOOKING ANY LONGER
I'LL BE ABLE TO DO!

I'LL HAVE THE POWER!
WAKE UP, ALFIE!
YOU REMEMBER THE O'MEAGANS?
THEIR PAPERWORK FINALLY CAME THROUGH.
YOU'VE BEEN ADOPTED!
REMEMBER THIS, JOHN.
..NICE THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD BOYS!
YOU MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE, FOLKS.
"ALFIE'S A BOY WITH A LOT OF POTENTIAL!"
THE END BUT THE NTH MAN STARS IN HIS OWN COMIC BOOK, ON SALE NEXT WEEK.

THIS IS GREAT - FRESH AIR TREES AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE ' THIS REMINDS ME OF THE OLD DAYS GROWING UP IN THESE MOUNTAINS
IT'S THE PERFECT WAY TO SPEND MY VACATION FROM THE SOVIET SUPER-SOLDIERS -- ENJOYING THE RUSSIAN COUNTRYSIDE INSTEAD OF CONSTANTLY FIGHTING FOR MY LIFE AT ANY GIVEN MO--
GGGRRRROOOOWWWLLL!
WHA--?!
SO MUCH FOR THAT THEORY
URSA MAJOR IN
SOPHIA*
*ENTIRE STORY TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN


MY "ENEMY" IS A SIX YEAR OLD?
DON'T BE SCARED, SIR-- STUFFINS WON'T HURT YOU HE LIKES YOU! HE TOLD ME! STUFFINS CAN TALK BUT ONLY TO ME AND HE WON'T HURT YOU BECAUSE HE'S A GOOD BEAR! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
MIKHAIL AND YOU ARE--
SOPHIA ILYITCH KHARKOVA.
WELL, SOPHIA-- IT'S FORTUNATE STUFFINS IS A GOOD BEAR...
...OR I WOULD HAVE HAD TO WRESTLE HIM--
HEE! HEE! HA!
LIKE THIS!
SUCH INNOCENCE-- WHAT A JOY TO BEHOLD
YOU THERE! I ORDER YOU TO UNHAND MY DAUGHTER AND STEP AWAY
PODOM-- THIS IS MY FRIEND, MIKHAIL
IDE! TAKE SOPHIA OFF TO THE CAMPSITE. I'LL DEAL WITH THIS... THIS TRANSIENT!
IT'S TIME TO WASH FOR DINNER, SOPHIA
SEE YOU LATER, MIKHAIL - I'M SORRY I SCARED YOU!
DON'T WORRY LITTLE CUB-- I'LL GET OVER IT
THE SOLITUDE OF SIBERIA WILL AFFORD YOU PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK ABOUT THE TERRORIZING OF YOUNG CHILDREN! LET ME SEE SOME IDENTIFICATION
CERTAINLY, BUT I BELIEVE YOU'RE OVERREACTING.
DO YOU KNOW WHO YOU'RE TALKING TO? I AM ANTON KHARKOV! AS A MEMBER OF THE POLITBORO I HAVE THE POWER TO--
THANK YOU, COMRADE-- NOW I'M AFRAID I MUST BE GOING.
--TO--HULP'E--TO WISH YOU A PLEASANT STAY HERE IN THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS MAJOR MIKHAIL URSUS!
A "SOVIET SUPER SOLDIER" I.D. CARD-- AS THE AMERICANS SAY, "DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT."

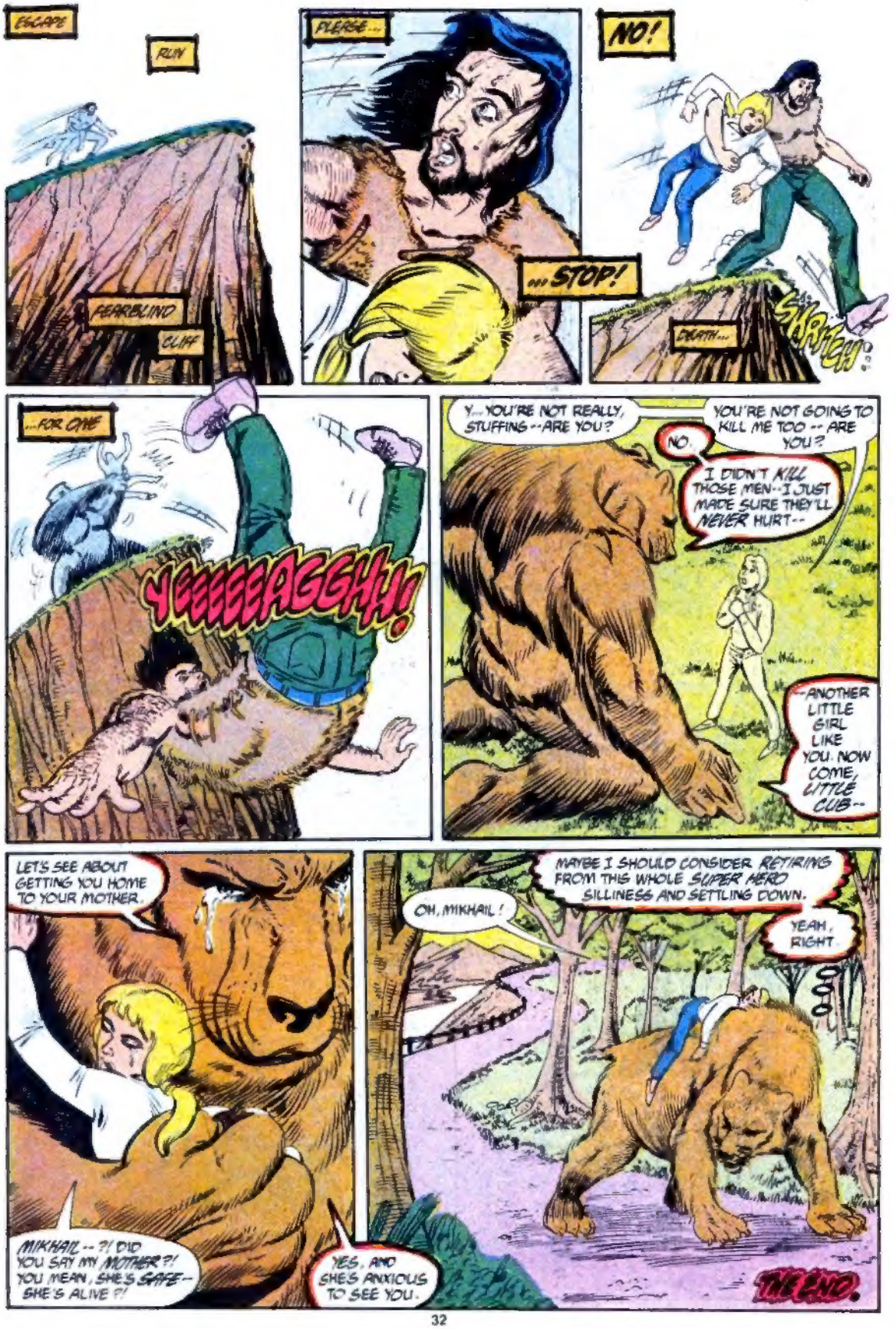
THREE DAYS LATER
THIS WAS REFRESHING. MAYBE I SHOULD CONSIDER RETIRING FROM THIS WHOLE "SUPER HERO" SILLINESS AND SETTLING...
BBBBRUUUMMMM
EH, WHAT'S ALL THAT COMMOTION UP AHEAD?
A ROADBLOCK? AN AMBULANCE.. I'VE NO REASON TO GET INVOLVED
SKREEEE
STILL THAT IS THE SAME PLACE I HAD MET THAT FAMILY...
NO!
THE GIRL & MOTHER.. SHE'S BEEN BEATEN!.. BUT BY WHO? WHY?!
PLEASE.. SOMEONE MUST HELP THEM. SOMEONE MUST FIND HER
MEDIC WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
IT'S HARD TO SAY SIR. SHE'S BEEN DELIRIOUS SINCE WE FOUND HER. I'D SAY SHE'S BEEN RUNNING FOR DAYS
MRS KHARKOV, IT'S ME.. MIKHAIL!
ATTACKED.. GOT AWAY.. PLEASE, MAKE THEM SEARCH.
WHAT IN THE NAME OF THE MOTHER COUNTRY IS GOING ON? HOW DYD THIS MAN GET HERE?! YOU THO, GRAB HIM THIS INSTANT
YES SIR CAPTAIN O'LEE!
GRRRRRRRR!
TEMPER, TEMPER

I'M ONLY GOING TO ASK THIS ONCE WHY HAVEN'T YOU BEGUN TO SEARCH FOR THAT WOMAN'S FAMILY?
WHOOM
THAT WOULD BE FOOLISH IT'S ALMOST DARK AND THE "MOUNTAIN MEN" WHO ATTACKED HER LIVE HERE THEY KNOW THIS TERRAIN I HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SAFETY OF MY MEN --
AND WHAT ABOUT THE SAFETY OF A FRIGHTENED AND HELPLESS LITTLE GIRL?!
CALM YOURSELF, MIKHAIL...
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO QUESTION ME? I COMMAND YOU TO SHOW ME YOUR IDENTIFICATION!
THIS IS GETTING TEDIOUS
WELL?
I MUST HAVE DROPPED MY WALLET
AS A YOUNG MUTANT LEFT TO DIE IN THESE MOUNTAINS, YOUNG MIKHAIL WAS RAISED BY THE ANIMAL KINGDOM THAT INHABITED THE HILLS
HE DREAMED OF A DAY WHEN HE'D BE ABLE TO ONCE AGAIN WALK AMONG PEOPLE HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE FUN
HE WAS WRONG HUMANS CAN BE SUCH--
--FOOLS!
WELL WHAT?
HE NAME IS MAJOR URSA MAJOR
NOW--NO ONE WILL MIND IF I CONDUCT MY OWN SEARCH?
AUUU

IN HIS BEAR FORM, URSA MAJOR'S HYPER-SENSES REPLACE HIS THOUGHTS...
MILES
HOURS
FOOTPRINTS
PERFUME
TRAIL
BLOOD?
HERE
NOW
CARNAGE
AFTERMATH
SNIF SNIF
SCENTS
FADED.
HIS MUTANT SENSES ARE AS INTUITIVE AS THEY ARE DEDUCTIVE
THREE FAMILY
SIX OTHERS
THEN
FEAR
WOOD DROPPED
SUDDEN
SAVAGE
NO TIME
STRUGGLE
UNEVEN
OUTNUMBERED
TERROR
PAIN
OVER
STILL ALIVE
FOR NOW
CONTIN...?!
STUFFING
ROWWL

NEAR
A--ARKADY, W-WHAT WAS THAT SOUND?
I DON'T KNOW, ANIEL. A WOUNDED BEAR AND SOMETHING MORE?
A BEAR, EH? THEN WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY :HA HA: WE HAVE ALL THE "FOOD" HE WOULD WANT.
UHH..
THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, BROTHER MAYBE WE'LL LEAVE THIS BEAR SOMETHING-- SOMEONE--TENDER AND SOFT TO CHEW ON
BOSHE!
THEN AGAIN--
EH?
--MAYBE YOU WON'T
ROOWL
SSSSSHRIIIIIKK!!
NO CONTEST
URSUS!
GRR
BLINK
KHARKOV! STAY STILL I'LL GET HELP!
I'VE SEEN IDEL, SHE'S SAFE NOW YOU MUST--
NO TOO LATE
THEY HAVE SOPHIA MY WIFE ESCAPED
WAS WRONG 'BOUT YOU... PLEASE, FIND SOPHIA
FIND SO... SOPHIA--
SLASH
DEAD
"CLIK-?"
SPROOW!
PAIN!
AMBUSH

THE OTHERS
BROTHERS--I'VE WOUNDED THIS CRAZED BEAR!
SOPHIA!
NO, COMRADE. YOU HAVE NOT WOUNDED ME...
...YOU HAVE MADE MY DAY!
RRRAAAGGG
BROTHERS, HELP ME!
THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE--A TALKING BEAR THAT FIGHTS LIKE A MAN! WE CAN NOT BE DEFEATED HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS!
THIS IS OUR KINGDOM! NO ONE CAN CHALLENGE US! NOTHING CAN--
ER, BROTHERS?
SLICE
STUFFING?
SSSRAASSH
DICE
AVENGE
--DEFEAT US
STUFFINS'LL BEAT YOU! HE'LL HURT YOU FOR HURTING POPPA!
IF YOU'RE RIGHT, THEN YOU'LL STAY WITH ME AS PROTECTION!
STUFFINS! HELP! HELP ME!
WHA--?!


ESCAPE
RUN
FEARBLIND
CLIFF
PLEASE...
...STOP!
NO!
SKRITCH!
DEATH...
...FOR ONE
YEEEEEAGGH!
Y--YOU'RE NOT REALLY, STUFFING--ARE YOU?
NO.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KILL ME TOO -- ARE YOU?
I DIDN'T KILL THOSE MEN--I JUST MADE SURE THEY'LL NEVER HURT--
--ANOTHER LITTLE GIRL LIKE YOU. NOW COME, LITTLE CUB--
LET'S SEE ABOUT GETTING YOU HOME TO YOUR MOTHER.
MIKHAIL -- ?! DID YOU SAY MY MOTHER ?! YOU MEAN, SHE'S SAFE -- SHE'S ALIVE ?!
YES, AND SHE'S ANXIOUS TO SEE YOU.
MAYBE I SHOULD CONSIDER RETIRING FROM THIS WHOLE SUPER HERO SILLINESS AND SETTLING DOWN.
OH, MIKHAIL!
YEAH, RIGHT.
THE END.

MARVEL® READERS PRESENT

TERRY KAVANAGH
EDITOR

MICHAEL ROCKWITZ
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear Marvel Comics Presenters,

I was wondering if the name of this comic had been changed to MARVEL COMICS' CHRISTMAS PRESENTS! MCP #18 was the first issue of this series in which I liked all four features. Here's why:

Bob Harras' Cyclops serial is definitely *not* a mutant story. Don't get me wrong -- it abounds with mutants -- but it's not another one of those stories in which nobody likes mutants, and that hurts the mutants' feelings, and the mutants try to save the world for the billionth time anyway, and they strive to be both human and super human simultaneously, and their lives become unbelievably confusing as a result of this, and who cares?!? Cyclops is that rare mutant who is complex but uncomplicated and who can look forward to a future brighter than his optic blasts without having to rely on a closetful of cliches. the artwork is equally bright and clear. I anxiously await the remaining installments of this story as well as more "mutant" stories like this one.

When "Panther's Quest" first started, I wrote to you expressing reservations about the wisdom of a twenty-five part saga, even one with as auspicious a beginning as this one's. The art was good (I loved Gene Colan and Tom Palmer's work on TOMB OF DRACULA), the story intriguing (setting it in South Africa rather than fictitious Azania gave it a greater sense of credibility and urgency), but nearly a year of a supposedly rotating feature? Well the past three months haven't lived up to my expectations--they've exceeded them. Rather than a long, drawn out story, I've found a well-paced tale.

John Byrne's She-Hulk story was... different. Great artwork, hilarious scripting, and classic villains -- the diabolical Doctor Doom, tyrant king of Latveria; Magneto, the mutant master of magnetism; Galactus, ravager of worlds... What? It's all just an imaginary story? I've "just read eight pages of hype for a new comic"? Oh well, at least Byrne was honest.

The fourth feature, "A Christmas Card", was hokey at times, and suffered from the triteness that often accompanies a parody of so well-known a story. However, I've seen worse (*much* worse) and feel that it was a good effort. I was delighted to see that there is potential for stories about non-super powered supporting characters in these pages. Any chance we'll see some others? I wouldn't mind a Mary Jane Parker or Wyatt Wingfoot story myself.

All in all, not bad. Here's to a happy new year of MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS (especially Black Panther stories!)

Erik C. Miller
Ashton-Aydelotte #155
Bloomington, IN 47406

Not bad? NOT BAD? Erik, you shower us with praises until our faces are as red as Mike Rockwitz's after his usual night on the town, and then you say that the issue was merely "not bad"? What do we have to do to get a "pretty good" or even a "fair" out of you? Print four stories from our CBG award nominee Scott Lobdell in one issue? Give you a dream date with assistant editor Sara Tuchinsky? You name it!

Dear Marvel,

I really enjoy reading MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS. It's one of my favorite comics. I really look forward to entering my local comic store every other week and buying it.

Let me tell you issue #18 was one of the best so far. You guys are doing a great job with this comic.

I was wondering about something. You've already had issues with people from the X-MEN and soon from EXCALIBUR in your pages, but will you be writing stories of the people of POWER PACK and THE NEW MUTANTS? Keep up the great work.

John Squires
2146 Floral Ave.
Chico, CA 95926

If you and others like you show interest in seeing characters from these groups here in the pages of MCP, you can rest assured that they'll be here soon, John. Thanks for your interest and support!

Dear guys,

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS is an enjoyable comic to read. Although the continuing stories are given only a quarter of the book each issue, the twice monthly schedule keeps the stories moving with better continuity than an ordinary monthly title , and the one-shot stories have typically been great diversions. This was especially true of the stories in MCP #18.

The She-Hulk story was well done, and I hope it helps sales on her new title. Even though I read the last page first (I was looking to see how long the story was, and when I found the last page I read it because I was already there), I still enjoyed the story. John Byrne can do wonders with any character, but he seems to show a special attachment to She-Hulk.

The Willie Lumpkin story was perhaps the most original satire of Dickens I've seen in a long while. It was also home to the best inking I've seen Joe Sinnott do in a long while. Joe's not usually one of my favorites, but I think he did a great job on this story.

As for the continuing stories, the Cyclops story has been developing nicely, although I've been a little bothered by the artwork. On page four, Moira comes running up with urgent news, and practically shouts it at Sean and Scott, but in the next panel, it looks like she just woke up. However, Ron and Bruce have done a good job of making Moira look "stiff" when she's under the Master Mold's control.

I have mixed feelings about the Black Panther story. It's always good to see the Apartheid issue discussed in a new medium where some people may be exposed to it for the first time, but on the other hand, I can't stand the "Rambo"-type movies where the U.S. wins fantasy victories over Vietnam, and I don't want to start reading stories where South Africa loses in some fantasy conflict. Granted, "Panther's Quest" is a long story that is just getting started, but I hope it does more to educate readers than it does simply to fantasize about Apartheid. I know this is comics and not the nation's conscience, but when you leave the Marvel Universe and start encroaching on our own world you've got to step carefully, particularly when you choose to walk on a touchy subject like this.

But what's a letter to MCP without a request for a character appearance? What I'd really like to see more than anything else is a conclusion to the Black Knight story presented in SOLO AVENGERS #4, where Dane Whitman faces a distant descendant of his over the Ebony Blade. Any hope for it?

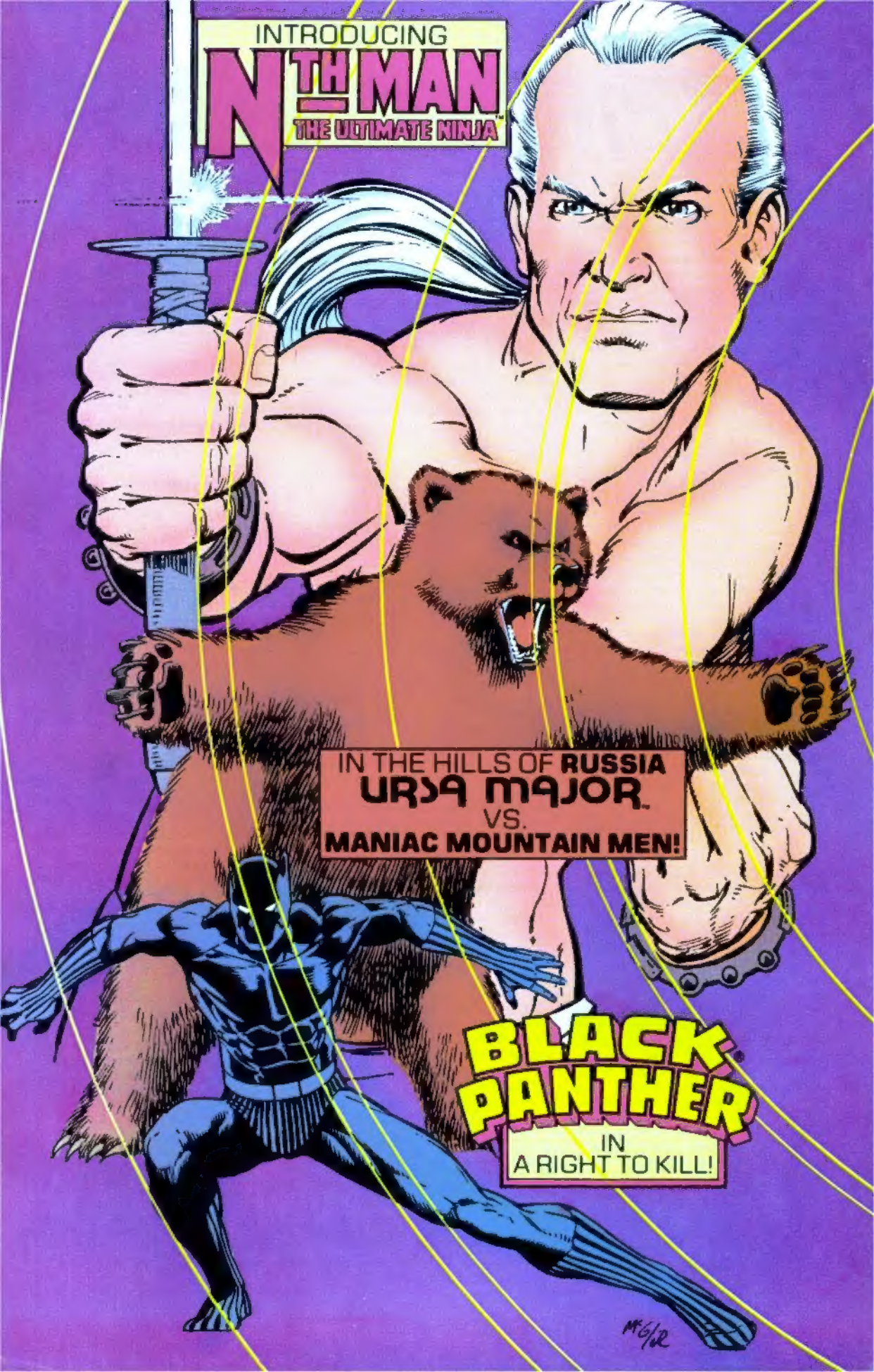
Herman "Hermit" Wilson
3690B North Hills Dr.
Austin, TX 78731

To tell you the truth, Herman, there's no hope for that in the near future. Even though it would make an interesting story, right now the Black Knight is in no condition to do anything after the events in AVENGERS #300. After he gets out of his present predicament, who knows?

As for your point on the Black Panther saga, we hope you realize by now that this is not just another fantastic and unrealistic story about a very real problem. This story will definitely not resolve itself in the fashion you are afraid of. It will remain very serious and frighteningly real. We hope that there are readers out there who will learn more about the way of life in South Africa from this story.

So now that you've read the Nth MAN story in this issue, we hope that you are mildly confused, terribly interested, and eager to read *more!*

If this is the case, you're in luck. Starting *this month*, Nth MAN will be a regular monthly comic, brought to you by the same *terrific* team of Legendary Larry Hama, Radical Ron Wagner, and Fancy Fred Fredericks. Don't miss issue #1!


INTRODUCING
NTH MAN
THE ULTIMATE NINJA
IN THE HILLS OF RUSSIA
URSA MAJOR
VS.
MANIAC MOUNTAIN MEN!
BLACK PANTHER
IN
A RIGHT TO KILL!